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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001958

SIPDIS

FOR WHA/PD (OHILTON), WHA/CEN (TKELLY), PM, AND INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON THE VISIT OF CJCS GENERAL RICHARD MYERS TO HONDURAS, AUGUST 18, 2003

1. Editorial in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "La Prensa" on 8/16 entitled "A long promise". "If we carefully read the statements of Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during his visit to Tegucigalpa, he didn't mention how he will help Honduras in its fight against drug trafficking. He simply stated that his government 'will seriously consider' the possibility of sending military equipment to support the Honduran armed forces in the fight against this global threat, which definitely affects the U.S. more than any country."

"When we hire a plumber to repair a water leak at home, the first thing he does is to close the main valve, then the secondary valves. When we talk about drugs, we all know the main valve is located south of our continent, and the secondary ones are in Central America, that is used as a bridge to transport coke and heroin to the American market."

"Why doesn't the U.S. government control this flow of drugs? Besides, drug traffickers evade the rigorous watch of U.S. authorities and maintain a great supply in the flourishing market of the Northern big cities."

"In addition, there isn't serious control on money laundering coming from this illegal and dangerous activity. Even though we see that some businesses grow in a surprising and enormous manner in front of our very eyes, there isn't real control on these activities."

"Surely, the DEA should collaborate extensively with the Honduran authorities, but the lack of their support shouldn't be an excuse for our security forces to give up on this fight. or just join the drug trafficking party."

Pierce